

*Season's Greetings and A Happy New Year*

December 2009

Dear Friends,

This year is again ending rather monotonically for this old recluse. A small event recalled was that in May I had an honour to be invited to The Tokugawa Art Museum for the sorting of an old South-East Asia Collection collected 80-90 years ago by Marquis Yoshichika. During my trip to Jakarta which had been incidentally planned in the same month, I received kind help from Mrs. Ekowati of the National Museum of Indonesia for inspecting the photographs of some 250 pieces and identifying their origins. I felt contented that my connection to Indonesia returned a little favour to the founder of the Tokugawa Museum and the author of *Journeys to Java* who, through his books, had greatly inspired my interest in the history and culture of Indonesia. To those friends of mine who remember my late wife, Etsuko, I would report that time flew like an arrow for us left behind and this October we held her 13th memorial service in accordance with the Buddhist custom in our family's temple in Gifu Prefecture. In November, I visited Sendai, North-East Japan, for surveying the sites related the what was to be called "Keicho Embassy" sent to Rome 400 years ago, and for writing a story in this Christmas card (overleaf).

Wishing that the coming year will be a peaceful one for all of us and for the world.

Yours sincerely,

*Toshi*

M. Iguchi,



**Tsunenaga Rokuyemon Hasekura in Prayer**

The first-known oil portrait of a Japanese person which is supposed to have been painted in 1615 in Madrid by an unknown painter, discovered after the Meiji Restoration (1868) in such a damaged state in the storehouse of the Sendai Clan. Scan-copied from a catalogue of The Sendai City Museum and defects around the face manually fixed on Corel PaintShop by M.I. Note that on this occasion Hasekura had no samurai topknot, though he wore a Japanese dagger with ribbons.



San Juan Bautista,  
reconstructed at Ishinomaki,  
near Sendai.